(e) Compulsory pre-payment of freight, where consignments are now booked on 'To Pay' basis, w.e.f. 1.10.96.

It is expected that with the introduction of the measures at (d) and (e), the position in this regard will improve.

Protection to Forests

*532. SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI:
KUMARI SUSHEELA TIRIYA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Nepali Forest Mafia operating in Terai Region of Indo-Nepal Border has killed a number of forest guards during the last several years;

(b) if so, the number of forest guards killed during the last three years;

(c) whether the Uttar Pradesh Government has submitted a ambitious project for the protection of 416 kms. long forest in the region;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the assistance sought for the purpose;

(e) the time by which the funds sought for the project are likely to be sanctioned; and

(f) the measures proposed to be taken to provide protection to the forest areas in this region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (CAPT. JAI NARAYAN PRASAD NISHAD) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As reported by the state governments of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh five forest guards have been killed during last three years in Tarai Region of Indo-Nepal border.

(c) to (e) A Project on 'Protection Measures Against Illicit Felling in U.P. Forest Areas Adjoining Nepal' has been submitted by the U.P. Government to Planning Commission, Government of India with a proposed cost of Rs. 12.18 crores, over a three year period, in six forest divisions, covering an area of 2.73 lakh ha. The Project is under consideration of Planning Commission for financial assistance to U.P. Forest Department.

The Proposed Project cost in three successive years is as under:—

S.No.	Major Head	Ist year	IInd year	IIIrd Year	Total
1	Establishment	125.40	234.96	243.36	603.72
2	Vehicles and communication	214.20	93.00	43.40	350.60
3	Civil works	95.05	45.00	30.00	170.05
4	Support Activities	30.45	31.20	32.45	94.10
	Total	465.10	404.16	349.21	1218.47

(f) Measures proposed to be taken to provide protection to the forest areas are as under:—

- Intensive patrolling in the sensitive areas
- Strengthening of the communication network
- Revamping and strengthening of armed forest protection force
- Provision of arms and ammunition to the forest staff
- Involvement of NGO's for prevention of illicit felling
- Coordination between various law enforcing agencies
- Establishment of forest check post with armed squad with facility of fast communication and movement
- Provision of additional vehicles for field inspections and for beat and highway patrolling
- Establishment of Watch Towers and Transmission Towers at strategic points
- Formation of a Trans-Boundary Conservation Board.

Decline in DAP Production

*533. PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been sharp decline in the production of diammonium phosphate (DAP) during the last six months or so in the country;

(b) if so, the percentage of decline in the DAP production and the reasons therefor;

(c) the estimated shortage of fertiliser anticipated during the coming months; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to meet the shortage of DAP?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) Yes, Sir.

*(b) DAP production during March-August, 1996 was 12.97 lakh tonnes. This constitutes a decline of 28.5% over the production during the corresponding period of the previous year. The reasons for this decline are;

(i) lack of adequate demand resulting in accumulation of inventories. DAP sales during April-July, 1996 were 1.44 lakh tonnes less than the previous year.

(ii) increase in the prices of imported intermediates like phosphoric acid and ammonia resulting in higher costs of production and the inability of the market to support the higher costs through better selling prices.

(c) and (d) The price distribution and movement of phosphatic fertilizers have been decontrolled since 1992. The availability of phosphatic fertilizers, which is determined by market forces of demand and supply, is presently comfortable. The government increased the rate of ad-hoc concession w.e.f. 6.7.1996 on all phosphatic and potassic fertilizers including indigenous DAP from Rs. 1000 to Rs. 3000 per metric tonne and imported DAP from Nil to Rs. 1500 per metric tonne. These measures are anticipated to spur its consumption. Department of Agriculture and Cooperation have estimated that DAP consumption will go up from 36.86 lakh metric tonnes in 1995-96 (provisional estimate) to 48.18 lakh metric tonnes in 1996-97. State Governments/Union Territory Administrations have also been impressed upon to fix realistic prices of decontrolled fertilizers under the ad-hoc concession scheme well in time during the Kharif and Rabi seasons in order to ensure that both indigenous production as well as imports of DAP are optimised by manufacturers/importers for meeting the higher levels of anticipated demand.

Forestry Research

*534 *PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any forestry research is being done by the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education, Dehradun;

(b) if so, the details of the research done so far and amount spent thereon; and

(c) the extent to which this research has helped to protect the forests?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (CAPT. JAI NARAYAN PRASAD NISHAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) with its eight Institutes and three Centres, is carrying out important research activities related to forest productivity enhancement, tree improvement, vegetative propagation, tissue culture, seed technology, medicinal plants, multipurpose tree species, biofertilizers, biopesticides, social forestry, agroforestry, pests and diseases, utilisation of timber and non-wood forest products, afforestation of cold/hot deserts, reclamation of saline-alkaline and mined sites, control of shifting cultivation and biodiversity conservation etc. The expenditure incurred by the ICFRE during the four years of the 8th plan period, i.e., from 1992-93 to 1995-96 is Rs. 160.99 crores.

Forestry research being undertaken by the ICFRE Institutes and Centres has resulted in increasing tree productivity which has helped in reducing pressure on forests. Increased productivity and easy availability of quality planting material have also led to adoption of tree cropping on a large scale as part of their normal agricultural practices by farmers in Haryana, Punjab, Western Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and other parts of the country. Research directed at protection of forests against pests and diseases has helped in restoring the health of the forests. Research related to utilisation of species of less commercial importance and other forest products has helped in increasing the income of local people and at the same time consideration and development of forests.

Developmental Programmes

*535. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the welfare and developmental programmes for the people of Uttar Pradesh announced by the Prime Minister between June 1 and August 18, 1996;

(b) whether the required resources for these programmes have been earmarked;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether necessary budgetary provisions have been made for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA): (a) The Prime Minister's announcements primarily related to:—

(i) facilitation of payment of sugarcane arrears to cultivators;

(ii) facilitating payment of electricity dues and clearance of pending power applications;

(iii) exemption from stamp duty, etc. for mortage of land and tractors by farmers;

(iv) sanction of certain irrigation programmes;

(v) payment of compensation at market value for acquisition of agricultural land;

(vi) opening of the closed Gorakhpur fertilizer factory,